

Message Text

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ACTION IO-03

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EUR-10 NSC-10 NSCE-00 SNM-01

DEAE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 PRS-01 OMB-01

TRSE-00 SSO-00 INRE-00 HEW-01 L-02 AGR-03 DRC-01

SCI-03 /062 W

----- 028599

O R 140928Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8499

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

USMISSION GENEVA

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LIMDIS

GENEVA FOR AMBASSADOR VANCE

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SNAR UN

SUBJECT: YUGOSLAV VIEWS ON US POSITIONS FOR CND MEETING

REF: A. STATE 26073; B. STATE 24898; C. STATE 24153

1. SUMMARY: DRAGAN NIKOLIC, CHIEF OF YUGOSLAV DELEGATION TO CND MEETING FEB 18, FAVORS ANNUAL COMMISSION MEETINGS BUT EMPHASIZED SIMILAR AIMS OF SHORT-TERM USG AND GOY VIEWS ON PERIODICITY. HE REACTED POSITIVELY TO US POSITIONS ON AGENDA ITEM 9 PER SE, BUT HE CONTINUES TO CONSIDER THAT US BEARS MAJOR RESPONSIBILITY FOR CURRENT SHORTAGES OF LICIT OPIUM. GOY HAS NO ITEMS TO RAISE AT MEETING. NIKOLIC VOLUNTEERED THAT GOY HAS JUST MADE CONTRIBUTION TO UNFDAC. END SUMMARY.

2. DELEGATION: CHIEF AND ONLY MEMBER OF YUGOSLAV DELEGATION
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TO CND MEETING OPENING IN GENEVA FEB 18 WILL BE, AS USUAL,

DRAGAN NIKOLIC. AT LEAST IN HIS SIXTIES, NIKOLIC IS UNOFFICIAL DEAN OF COMMISSION WITH WHICH HE HAD BEEN ASSOCIATED SINCE 1937 DURING LEAGUE OF NATIONS DAYS. ALTHOUGH HIS WHITE HAIR AND GENTLENESS GIVE HIM GRANDFATHERLY MANNER, HE CAN BE DOGGED IN DEFENDING GOY POSITIONS.

3. PERIODICITY OF COMMISSION MEETINGS: NIKOLIC STATED THAT HIS GOVERNMENT FAVORS ANNUAL COMMISSION MEETINGS EVEN IF CURRENT INTERNATIONAL CRISIS SUBSIDES. (HE IS OF OPINION THAT DIMINISHING OF CRISIS CAN ONLY BE SPOKEN OF IN RELATIVE TERMS IN ANY EVENT.) HE PRESENTED HIS GOVERNMENT'S POSITION IN PURELY PRACTICAL TERMS: BIENNIAL MEETINGS PERMIT TOO MUCH TIME TO PASS BEFORE COMMISSION MEETS TO CONSIDER ACTION PROGRAM FOR DEALING WITH FAST-CHANGING INTERNATIONAL DRUG SITUATION. IN NIKOLIC'S OPINION, THIS TENDS TO REDUCE THE COMMISSION TO HISTORICAL DEBATING SOCIETY WHICH DISCUSSES SITUATION AS IT EXISTED TWO YEARS BACK, RATHER THAN ENABLE IT TO FUNCTION AS ACTION BODY TO REACT DECISIVELY TO CHANGING SITUATION. NIKOLIC AGREES, HOWEVER, WITH PROPOSALS TO REDUCE COSTS OF SPECIAL OR ANNUAL SESSIONS BY DISPENSING WITH SUPERFLUOUS REPORTS, SUCH AS SUMMARY RECORDS, WHICH HE CONSIDERS OF NO PRACTICAL USE. HE IS ALSO FAVORABLE TO MORE FREQUENT CONSULTATIONS AMONG MEMBER-NATIONS BY MAIL. SUMMING UP VIEWS ON PERIODICITY, NIKOLIC OBSERVED THAT IN SHORT RUN GOY AND USG AGREE ON NEED TO HOLD LESS COSTLY MEETINGS ON ANNUAL BASIS TO DEAL EFFECTIVELY WITH INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS CRISIS, WHETHER ONE CALLS THEM ANNUAL OR SPECIAL SESSIONS. HE DOWN-GRADED IMPORTANCE OF DIFFERENCES IN LONGER-TERM VIEWS.

4. AGENDA ITEM 9: NIKOLIC PATIENTLY HEARD OUT DETAILED PRESENTATION OF US POSITION ALONG LINES PARAS 1 THROUGH 4 OF REFTEL A. HIS IMMEDIATE REACTION WAS POSITIVE AND HE INDICATED THAT HE COULD SUPPORT OUR PROPOSALS IN COMMISSION MEETING. HE PARTICULARLY ADVOCATED BANNING GUM OPIUM PRODUCTION AND REPLACING THAT METHOD WITH PROCESSING OF POPPY STRAW TO YIELD MORPHINE DIRECTLY WITHOUT PRODUCING OPIUM AS INTERMEDIATE STEP. THUS, ANY OPIUM WHICH TURNS UP IS AUTOMATICALLY ILLEGAL AND ITS POSSESSORS CAN BE PROSECUTED. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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(THIS IS CURRENTLY SITUATION IN YUGOSLAVIA.)

5. NIKOLIC MADE CLEAR, HOWEVER, THAT HE CONTINUES TO BELIEVE THAT USG BEARS MAJOR RESPONSIBILITY FOR SHORTAGES OF LEGAL OPIUM FOR MEDICINAL AND SCIENTIFIC USES. HE REPEATEDLY REFERRED TO "US PRESSURES TO CLOSE DOWN OPIUM CULTIVATION IN TURKEY" AS CAUSE OF CURRENT SHORTAGES, ALTHOUGH AT ONE POINT HE SAID THAT THIS IS NOW HISTORY. HE EXPLAINED THAT HIS OWN SOLUTION

WOULD HAVE BEEN THE IMPOSITION OF CONTROLS TO REDUCE DIVERSION OF TURKISH CROP INTO ILLICIT CHANNELS, AND GRADUALLY TO INTRODUCE PROCESSING OF POPPY STRAW AS FURTHER MEANS OF PREVENTING LEAKAGE OF LEGAL CROP. HE FLATLY STATED THAT ONE CAN'T DOWN VITAL SOURCE OF OPIUM TO DETRIMENT OF LEGAL REQUIREMENTS.

6. ITEMS OF INTEREST TO GOY: NIKOLIC STATED THAT HE HAS NO ITEMS TO RAISE DURING SESSION.

7. GOY CONTRIBUTION TO UNFDAC: NIKOLIC VOLUNTEERED THAT GOY MADE CONTRIBUTION OF \$6000 TO UNFDAC ON JAN 25, 1974.

8. COMMENT: AS LONG AS US PROPOSALS ARE KEPT WITHIN FRAME-
WORK OF RELEASE OF US STOCKPLIES, EMPHASIS ON PRODUCTION OF OPIUM OR MORPHINE FROM POPPY STRAW, DEVELOPMENT OF MEANS TO EXTRACT LARGER QUANTITIES FROM EXISTING CROPS AND SEARCH FOR SYNTHETIC SUBSTITUTES FOR OPIUM AS MEANS OF DEALING WITH CURRENT LICIT OPIUM SHORTAGES, NIKOLIC CAN PROBABLY BE RELIED ON FOR SUPPORT. IF DELIBERATIONS COME AROUND TO CAUSES OF CURRENT SHORTAGES, HOWEVER, HE PROBABLY CAN BE EXPECTED TO CRITICIZE US ALONG LINES OF PARA 5 ABOVE. LIKE TURKISH GOVERNMENT (ANKARA 1068), HE TENDS TO SEE INCONSISTENCY IN OUR CURRENT EFFORTS TO DEAL WITH SHORTAGES OF LEGAL OPIUM AND OUR PAST POLICY TO SUPPORT CLOSING DOWN TURKISH OPIUM CULTIVATION ALTHOUGH EFFORT MADE TO CONVINCE HIM OF IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS BEHIND BOTH POLICIES. IF TURKS OR OTHERS AT MEETING SHOULD RAISE QUESTION OF GOING BACK INTO OPIUM BUSINESS, NIKOLIC COULD BE SYMPATHETIC, PARTICULARLY IF THEY OFFERED ASSURANCES OF ADEQUATE CONTROLS TO PREVENT DIVERSION INTO ILLICIT TRAFFIC WHILE PROSPECTS OF LEGAL SHORTAGES REMAIN IN SPITE OF AMELIORATIONS OFFERED BY US PROPOSALS. IN SUCH SCENARIO, WE BELIEVE BEST TACK TO WIN HIS SUPPORT
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WOULD BE CONDITION THAT ONLY STRAW PROCESSING COULD BE USED TO EXTRACT OPIATES FROM ANY AREAS OPENED OR REOPENED TO POPPY CULTIVATION.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: OPIUM, DRUG CONTROL, MEETING AGENDA, MEDICAL RESEARCH, MEETINGS, COMMITTEES, INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, MEETING PROCEEDINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 14 FEB 1974
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: morefirh
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974BELGRA00703
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: BELGRADE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740234/aaaabfdk.tel
Line Count: 158
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION IO
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: A. STATE 26073; B. STATE 24898; C. S, TATE 24153
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: morefirh
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 18 JUN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <18 JUN 2002 by kelleyw0>; APPROVED <27 JUN 2002 by morefirh>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: YUGOSLAV VIEWS ON US POSITIONS FOR CND MEETING
TAGS: SNAR, UN, CND
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005